

## **Guidelines for OVHA Coverage**

### **ITEM: Nutritional Supplements**

**DEFINITION:** A nutritional supplement is a commercially available, specially formulated addition to an oral diet, to fulfill an individual's caloric needs.

**GUIDELINES:** The use of a nutritional supplement is appropriate for individuals who:

- Have had a recent (within the past 6 months) unplanned weight loss of 10% of body weight AND
- Cannot meet their caloric needs with regular foods, due to an inability to consume an adequate quantity of pureed, soft, or regular foods, where the individual cannot substitute egg-nogs, milkshakes, puddings, or ice cream to improve caloric intake AND
- Increased metabolic need resulting from severe trauma OR
- Malabsorption conditions OR
- Nutritional wasting due to chronic disease OR
- Nutritional deficiency identified by lowered serum protein levels or assessment by a registered dietician that caloric/protein intake is not obtainable through regular, liquefied, or pureed foods.

Length of authorization is 6 months.

**CAUTIONS:** Consideration must be given to body mass index and ideal body weight in deciding whether a nutritional supplement is appropriate.

### **EXAMPLES OF DIAGNOSES:**

Metabolic conditions: Burns, infections, major bone fracture

Malabsorption difficulties: cystic fibrosis, renal disease, short gut syndrome, Crohn's disease

Nutritional wasting: cancer, advanced AIDS, pulmonary insufficiency, conditions resulting in dysphagia

Nutritional deficiency: protein malnutrition

### **REFERENCES:**

CTS and Comparisons Drug Information Service. 2001 Loose Leaf Edition.

USP DI Information for the Health Care Professional. Volume 1, 20<sup>th</sup> edition. US Pharmacopeial Convention, Inc. Rockville, MD 2001

**Signature of Medical Director:** \_\_\_\_\_

**OVHA Director's signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:**

**Revision 1:**

**Revision 2:**  
**Revision 3:**